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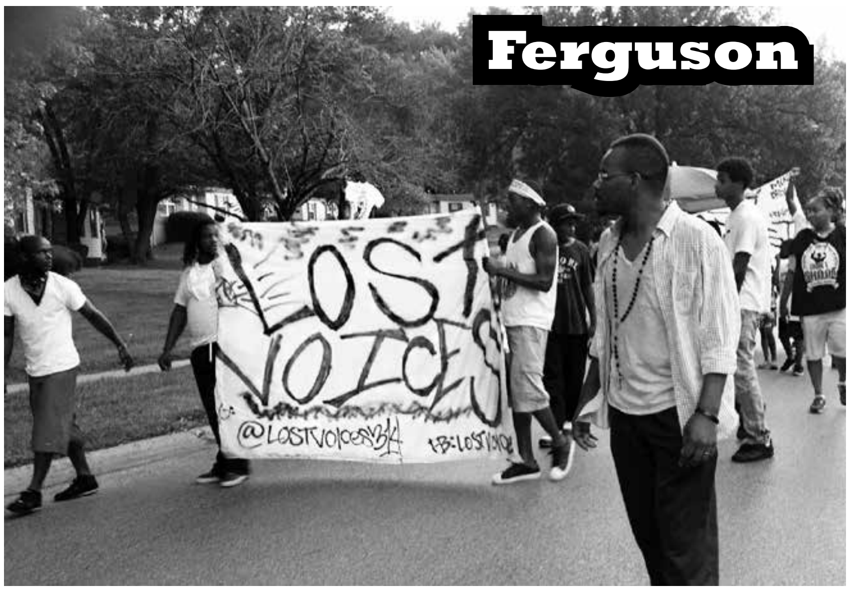
FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM • LUCHE POR EL COMUNISMO • PLP

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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SMASH RACIST













POLICE TERROR

OUR FIGHT

✯Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

✯Only the dictatorship of the working class — communism — can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

✯Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

✯While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

✯Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society's benefits and burdens.

✯Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit black, Latino, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

✯Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women — sexism — and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

✯Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

✯Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

✯Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

CONTACT US

Email
desafio.challenge@gmail.com
Mail
Box 808 GPO, Brooklyn, NY 11202
Internet
www.plp.org
challengenewspaper.wordpress.com

WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual.

While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

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Editorial

Racist Murders Expose Face of U.S. Fascism

When the bosses' mad-dog cops murdered Michael Brown and Eric Garner, the cause of death was capitalism.

Brown was shot six times by racist cop Darren Wilson for walking while black on a street in Ferguson, Missouri. Garner was killed by a chokehold by racist cop Daniel Pantaleo after trying to break up a fight on Staten Island, New York City. These are just two of many murders of black and Latin workers and youth nationwide. There are at least 400 police killings per year that are reported to the FBI by local police. These racist executions represent the rise of fascism — capitalism in crisis, capitalism unmasked.

As the U.S. faces off against rising imperialist rivals like China, and moves inevitably toward a broader war, U.S. rulers need to intimidate U.S. workers. Wages and social services (education, health, housing) must be cut to divert more resources to the bosses' military machine. The working class has a long history of rising up against capitalist oppression. Our class-conscious anger, when channeled and organized under communist leadership, is the greatest threat to the bosses' brutal system and their imperialist plans. As we've seen in Missouri and New York, they respond with both sticks and carrots, with terror and reforms.

In recent weeks, as multiracial masses of workers fight back in anti-racist rebellions and protests in 90 U.S. cities, the capitalists are doing all they can to divert blame from the profit system. Liberal politicians, editorial writers and academics cloud the issue by calling for police reform. But regardless of any superficial changes they make, the bosses will still hold state power. The cops and the courts will still serve them. A brutal and coercive state apparatus will keep the profits rolling in. With over two million people behind bars, and nearly another five million on probation or parole, the U.S. prison system is "by far the largest in the world" (National Research Council, 2014). The U.S. incarceration rate is 50 percent higher than Russia's and six times the rate in China (International Centre for Prison Studies, 2013).

Racism is the brick and mortar of U.S. prisons and jails. Black and Latin people collectively make up about 30 percent of the general U.S. population, but close to 70 percent of the U.S. prison population — not because they commit more crimes, but because they are "differentially targeted and processed throughout the U.S. criminal justice system" (Psychology Today, 2/3/14).

Racism Oppresses ALL Workers

Bosses reap hundreds of billions of dollars in super-profits by keeping wages and living conditions for black, Latin and immigrant workers especially low. These racist differentials constitute a "race to the bottom." Used as a club over white workers' heads, they effectively drag down standards for all while boosting the capitalists' bottom lines. In just one example, masses of white autoworkers were laid off after the auto bosses moved plants to lower-wage areas in the U.S. and to Latin America.

Cops help bosses break strikes. Segregation, racist terror, and the deportation of undocumented immigrants help perpetuate low pay, mass unemployment, and rotten schools and housing. The sexist oppression of women workers lowers wages even further. Meanwhile, the capitalists wage one imperialist oil war after the next, killing millions worldwide to protect their profits. The capitalists also need the cops to stifle anti-war dissent to keep the working class docile while they bang the drums of nationalism, a murderous anti-worker ideology.

Capitalist-on-Black Crime

The rulers' racist media like to dwell on what they call "black-on-black crime." This serves two purposes. First, it fosters the stereotype of black males as violent criminals. Second, it masks the fact that it's the ruling class that injures black youth with mass unemployment, drugs and a culture saturated with capitalism, racism, and sexism.

The real crime is capitalism's racist super-exploitation of black workers. The real criminals are the capitalists. They reap super-profits by stealing from black workers through segregated housing and schools, mass imprisonment, lower wages, and Jim Crow health care. They lure jobless youth into their military to be killed — and to kill other workers — in imperialist oil wars.

Black-on-black crime is not the issue. It is capitalist-on-black crime that rules society. Only communism can end that crime.

Communism is the Answer

We need a communist revolution to destroy capitalism and racism once and for all. No ruling class has ever ceded its power peacefully. The bosses' unceasing violence against the working class must be met with workers' revolutionary violence. Workers' power will eliminate the bosses and the profits stolen from the value produced by the working class. A communist society will be run by and for workers. That is the goal of Progressive Labor Party, which is organizing our class in more than twenty countries.

To forestall revolution and their ouster from power, the liberal bosses tell us the solution is to hire more black cops and elect more black officials. But those cops and officials will serve the same rotten ruling class.

Witness South Africa, where liberals ended apartheid in the 1990s. Today, most top government positions are held by black mouthpieces for the big bankers and industrialists. Unemployment is even higher now than under apartheid. Housing and health care are worse. Black bosses are enforcing the profit system to protect their piece of the profit pie. In 2012, a multi-racial police force massacred scores of striking black miners.

Or consider Israel, where the fascist rulers have established apartheid to oppress workers in Palestine. It is no coincidence that the Israeli bosses trained police in South Africa — along with the black police captain put in charge to cool down Ferguson. Racism is an international capitalist phenomenon.

Black Lackeys and Fascist Terror

From Obama on down, the U.S. bosses use a constellation of black lackeys, including FBI informer Al Sharpton, working hand-in-glove with the White House to divert the masses; Jesse Jackson, who was booed in Ferguson, and Attorney General Eric Holder, who allowed racist, murdering cops to roam free as chief of the force in Washington, DC (see Red Eye, page 7). Meanwhile, racist, fascist terror is mounting.

A master of deception, Obama tells us the main lesson of Ferguson is that police should not use Pentagon-supplied wartime weapons in U.S. neighborhoods. "President Obama has ordered a comprehensive review of the government's

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Fightback in Ferguson continues

PL'ers Greet Rebels with Communism

Ferguson Workers Lead Antiracist Fight



FERGUSON, MO, August 29 — During the recent rebellions here, a young multiracial team from Progressive Labor Party visited the area to support these antiracist actions and put forward the idea that communism is the only way to defeat racism and capitalism. Here is one account.

The bosses' media keep spreading the lie that "outside agitators" aren't wanted in Ferguson, but that couldn't be further from the truth. Hundreds of workers and students received CHALLENGE and a PL leaflet calling for more rebellion against racist police murders. They embraced communist ideas and calls for communist revolution. An older couple contributed to our lunch after a brief discussion on the history of racism in Ferguson and the U.S. and the lack of opportunities for working-class youth.

During our time here, we connected with a group of young freedom fighters that formed a new organization during the rebellion following Michael Brown's murder. The group consists of youth who met night after night to battle the cops. Calling themselves The Lost Voices, they are dedicated to preventing racist police murder from becoming the norm.

The Lost Voices have camped out on Florissant Avenue, Ferguson's main strip, where protests have persisted for two weeks. One leader of the group said tshey march daily so that workers in Ferguson and around the world know that "we out here."

One of the most exciting developments was a PLP study group with these youth, where we discussed the Our Fight section in CHALLENGE. Beyond outright agreement with our antiracist stance, these young workers echoed our idea that the abolition of money will aid in creating a new, worker-led world.

Working-class support for the rebels of Ferguson is evident. Workers regularly pull up to the Lost Voices camp, deliver food and water, or take the protesters grocery shopping. Car horns blare constantly, with passing fists raised in solidarity.

The anger and hatred toward the police and the bosses they protect is still thick. A young worker who lives on Canfield Green, where Mike Brown was murdered, said, "If we didn't fight back, nobody would have cared." Other workers let us know that if Darren Wilson, the KKKop who murdered Michael, isn't convicted, "We will burn down this entire state."

On our last night, we had a rally of 50 through the streets of Ferguson. Workers responded by joining the march with their kids, holding signs from balconies, honking as we marched, and yelling out words of solidarity. It was a powerful experience. After a brief water break from the heat, we rallied again and received even more overwhelming support from local workers. People's fightback spirit against police harassment and the murder of black people was unwavering and inspirational: "The whole system is guilty!" We heard this statement over and over during our time in Ferguson.

The ruling class and misleaders like Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson pushed for peace and more black cops and politicians, but the working class wasn't falling for it. Jackson was confronted by workers and youth who asked him, "When are you going to stop selling us out?" They told him, "Get out — we don't want you here!"

This trip to Ferguson has taught the young people who went a lesson on how to work among the masses. Two of them have joined PLP.✪

'What has to go? 'The whole system!'

CHICAGO, August 29 — "I'll go!" shouted a young woman near the end of tonight's Fight Back Like Ferguson forum. She was responding to an appeal for volunteers to attend a rally in Ferguson, Missouri called for the next morning. The news of hundreds of workers violently fighting back against the racist police murder of a young black man in Ferguson has inspired millions of workers and youth, from St. Louis to Chicago to Palestine. As one speaker who had visited Ferguson shortly after the rebellion explained, "I've never been in a demonstration before where people were willing to die." This fearless commitment to fighting racism deeply moved those who went to Ferguson. By the end of the forum, a new team of four volunteers was preparing to head out early in the morning.

Featured at the forum were reports from two PLP-led organizing teams that recently returned from Ferguson. One of these PL'ers began the forum by leading the audience in chants brought back from Ferguson. Immediately the political discussion was sharpened with the chant "Who do we want?" "Darren Wilson!" "How do we want him?" "Dead!"

An irate woman in the audience objected to the chant about killing. Others objected to the use of violence. The discussion that followed eventually led to the need for revolutionary violence to destroy this racist system, which uses police killings of young black men to terrorize workers into submitting to capitalist rule. We were told about PLP study groups being formed among young workers who are willing to die rather than go back to the way of life that was Ferguson before the protests began.

We saw many photos and videos that showed Ferguson workers standing up to the kkkops and their rifles and bearcats (armored personnel carriers). We heard many stories of how community members welcomed the support of the PLP volunteers, despite the hype in the media about how "outsiders" weren't wanted in Ferguson. They accepted and read over 400 copies of CHALLENGE. These workers adapted a PLP chant to say "What has to go?" " The whole system."

More than 60 people attended the forum proof of the tremendous support for the antiracist fighters of Ferguson. More than half of the audience came from our friends in the community where the forum was held: CHALLENGE readers and others from Chicago State University, Southsiders For Peace, and Unity in Diversity.

One speaker summed up the current situation by saying that the local cops, the state police and the National Guard couldn't defeat the power of the workers. It is only the ideas of racism and nationalism which hold our class back. By winning workers to antiracism, internationalism and communist equality, we will smash the hold the bosses have on the working class.✪



Racist Murders Expose Face of U.S. Fascism

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decades-old strategy of outfitting local police departments with military-grade body armor, mine-resistant trucks, silencers and automatic rifles" (New York Times, 8/24/14).

In fact, Obama and the finance capitalists he serves aren't worried about endangered workers. Police SWAT teams invade workers' homes — sometimes killing innocents — an astounding 45,000 times a year (see "The War Comes Home," page 8). But as Ferguson demonstrated, the rulers' savage militarism can turn working-class protests more violent — a potential threat to profits. In any case, cutting back police firepower (for now) won't change a thing. As servants of the class that holds state power, cops possess a license to kill. Cop Wilson gunned down Michael Brown with his standard service weapon. Cop Pantaleo strangled Eric Garner with his bare hands.

U.S. Racist Atrocities: Fuel for Foes

While U.S. bosses seem to have temporarily pacified angry workers in Missouri and New York, the racist murders of Michael Brown and Eric Garner still give them cause for concern. With global conflict intensifying from Ukraine to Iraq and Syria, these outrages hinder the U.S. imperialists' preparations for global wars. They desperately need support from their overseas allies. But as the rulers' enemies grow bolder, this backing is proving elusive.

In "Ferguson From Afar" (8/21/14), *Foreign Affairs*, the leading finance-capital-funded policy journal in the U.S., noted: "Flagrant race discrimination … undermines U.S. efforts to appeal to the hearts and minds of peoples of the world." The journal recalls how state-sponsored U.S. racism in the 1960s gave imperialist Russian rivals a huge advantage in Africa. Now U.S. foes in Russia, China and Iran — and even supposed friends in Saudi Arabia, Europe and South America — are using their mass media to highlight the latest racist atrocities and expose U.S. moralizing and hypocrisy. To much of the world, ISIS's beheaders (see Red Eye, page 7) seem no worse than the U.S. rulers' butcher cops.

Build Progressive Labor Party

Capitalists can occasionally muzzle their killer police in the name of reform. But to be free of racist cop terror, workers must rid the world of the profiteering class that creates it. This will happen only when the Progressive Labor Party is built into a mass working-class revolutionary party. It will happen only when we gather the strength to overthrow capitalism and establish communism: workers' power. Join and build PLP now!✪

Demand Racist Cops Pay for Murdering Tyrone West



BALTIMORE, MD, August 27 — Supporters of justice for Tyrone West — 44-year-old black worker beaten to death while in police custody in July, 2013 — chanted, "Can't stop! Won't stop! Till killer cops are in cell blocks!" They also expressed anger about the police murder of Michael Brown. Solidarity was strongly voiced in support of the struggle for justice in Ferguson. There were frequent chants of "Hands up! Don't shoot!"

Every week since Tyrone's murder, family members and supporters have rallied, demanding prosecution of the Baltimore City police and Morgan State University police who took the life of another black man after what began as a traffic stop.

Tyrone's sister Towanda, who spoke at this week's powerful rally, had previously explained, in accord with reports by eye witnesses: "My brother was dragged out of the car by his dreadlocks, and was called the 'N' word on several different occasions."

Witness Ayesha Rucker said that it started when both plainclothes cops arresting Mr. West began punching him at the same time, as he stood waiting to be arrested. Ms. Rucker then explained that he was sprayed with mace or pepper spray as he screamed for help and attempted to escape. When about 10 officers arrived for backup, she said, they tackled Mr. West, and an officer kicked him in the face.

Another witness, Shawanda Wilson, said that after Mr. West tried to escape from the initial beating and spray, and ran a short distance to an alley, officers caught up with him and started beating him with batons on his head and back. Wilson further explained that numerous officers, some from Morgan State University, arrived and also began to beat the man.

Yet another witness, Duane Bond — a rising sophomore at University of Baltimore at the time, and a class representative — said he was at a relative's house and had gone outside when he heard women screaming. Bond said he "vividly remembers" one of the officers "cocking his arm all the way back, and laying a haymaker [forceful blow] on the man. At this point, he [Mr. West] was already definitely down, and I didn't see any movement."

Witness Shawanda Wilson further explained that the officers backed away and a policeman could be seen performing CPR on the man. She said West was bleeding from his mouth.

At this week's rally and march, one participant was Abdul Salaam. He is a survivor of a beating — barely weeks earlier — by the same exact cops who initiated the beating that led to Tyrone's murder.

State's Attorney Gregg Bernstein has decided NOT to pursue charges against any of the cops involved. This is not an isolated incident. Bernstein has never prosecuted any officer for killing workers. In fact, over 100 people have been shot by Baltimore police since 2005. None of those officers have ever been taken to court, let alone found guilty.

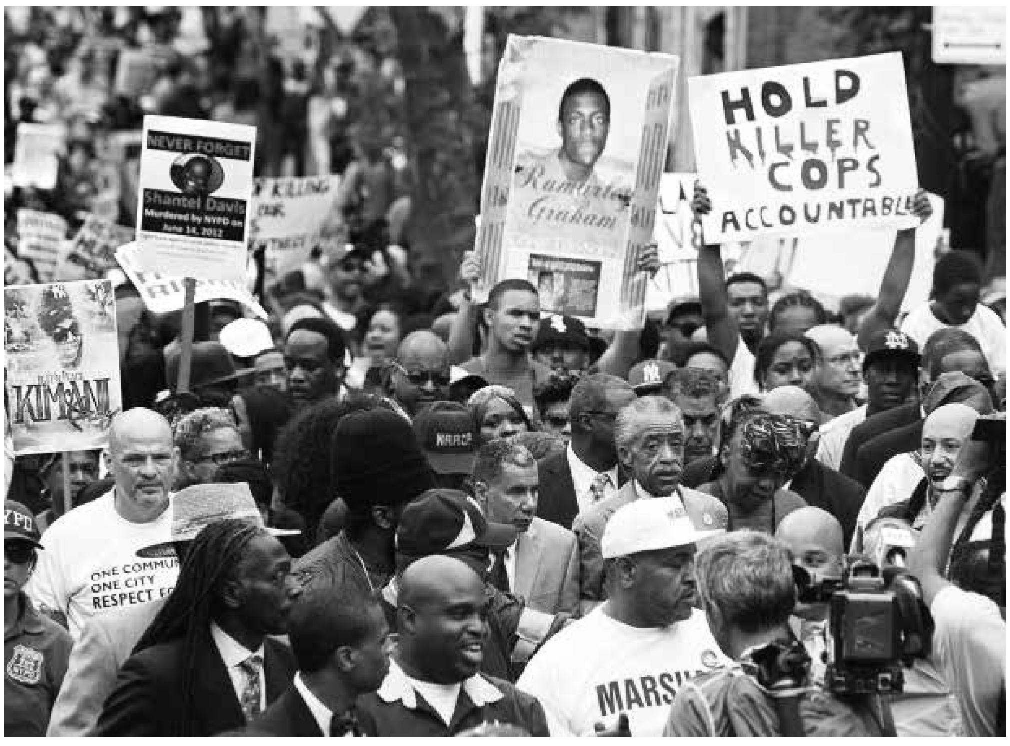
Tyrone West was unarmed, just like most other people who are killed by the police. He didn't deserve to die.

For over twenty years, the city required youth to be home during summer nights. Last week, it launched a more fascistic curfew requiring all youth under 14 to be indoors by 9 pm (those under 16 by 10 pm).

Among many other powerful speeches at this week's rally, a member of Progressive Labor Party spoke. He pointed out that a black woman, man or child is killed somewhere in the United States approximately once every 36 hours by police, by security guards, or by self-appointed law enforcers, like George Zimmerman, the racist killer of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin in Florida in 2012.

The PL'er said that this murderous racism exists because the capitalist system needs racism to justify paying very low wages to a large part of the working class. In fact, about a third of corporate profits are a direct result of this system using millions of black workers as cheap labor. Keeping racism alive is a life-and-death necessity for capitalism. For us, the opposite is true. Defeating capitalism and defeating racism is a matter of life and death for our class, the working class! Communist revolution is what we need!✪

Marchers Indict Racist NYPD Murderers of Eric Garner



STATEN ISLAND, NY August 23 — The ripple effect of the 10-day Ferguson rebellion over the murder of Michael Brown reached Staten Island today, both in good ways and bad. In fact, it was more like there were two rallies today, one inspired by the rebellion, and the other determined to make sure the rebellion will not be repeated.

The vast majority of the 4,000 workers, students and youth, women and men of all colors came inspired by, and in solidarity with the Ferguson rebellion. This was evident as thousands put their hands in the air and chanted, "Hands Up, Don't Shoot," the rallying cry of Ferguson.

They came because racist police terror is out of control across the U.S., as the bosses try to terrorize black and Latin youth into accepting a future of poverty and war. Reacting to the NYPD's racist murder of black worker Eric Garner, PL'ers were able to lead chants such as "How do you spell racist? N.Y.P.D.; How do you spell murderer? N.Y.P.D."

The bodies are piling up while the prisons, police precincts and unemployment offices are overflowing. Young unarmed black men were murdered by the police in St. Louis and Los Angeles while the Ferguson rebellion was still raging.

Marchers came from unions and schools, churches and community organizations, in cars and buses and by the Staten Island ferry. In true sellout mode, Sharpton negotiated with the cops and transit bosses to stop all local S.I. buses from going to the rally site, in the hopes of keeping the most angry and militant workers and youth away from the march. A marshal from 1199 SEIU said his union brought 30 buses to the rally (the mothers of murder victims Sean Bell and Ramarley Graham are both members of 1199), and there was a notable turnout of transit workers (Eric Garner's sister is a bus operator) in spite of the fact that the Transport Workers Union and Amalgamated Transit Union leadership did not mobilize for the rally. PLP tried to mobilize our co-workers and students from around the city and distributed more than 1,200 CHALLENGES and several thousand flyers, reflecting mass support for the Ferguson rebellion.

But as much as the majority of marchers embraced the rebellion, that's how much the bosses fear it. So they called out their chief ambulance chaser, MSNBC talk show host and FBI informant Al Sharpton to put out the fire.

Surrounded by a rogues' gallery of preachers and pastors, imams and union hacks, with the Nation of Islam providing security (for the cops and Sharpton), the message from the stage was clear. "We are not against the police, we are for the police! We want to get rid of the bad apples," Sharpton said. He spent more time attacking the idea of fighting back than he did police terror. "If you're not for non-violence, organize your own march! This one is mine! Don't piss in my pot," he said. And the union leaders backed him up. SEIU had many signs that read "Support NYPD — Stop Police Brutality."

The point they were making was that they know how to keep a lid on things. And the fact is one thing that made Ferguson possible was that there was no established mis-leadership in place to snuff out the rebellion.

We will continue to dig in where we are and build a mass base for revolutionary violence against racist terror, and for communist revolution. Our strategy is to answer racist cop killings with walkouts at schools and campuses and bus barns and hospitals. When masses of workers and students walk out and converge on police headquarters under the leadership of PLP, those hundreds will begin to lead tens of thousands. Then the lid will be off and the struggle for state power will be on.✪

Turn Antiracist Rebellion into Class War

LOS ANGELES, CA — Weeks after the racist NYPD cops choked Eric Garner to death, their equally racist west coast buddies the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) beat to death Latin worker Omar Abrego, and killed 25-year-old black youth Ezell Ford here. Abrego was a 37-year-old shipping worker for OnTrac. Hundreds have protested and marched every day in front of the police station where cops shot Ezell Ford. Ezell's brother said he was "shot in the back and murdered like an animal!" The cops claimed he made "suspicious" movements.

For decades, the U.S. ruling class has intensified it's attack on mostly black and Latin youth with the so-called "War on Drugs", incarcerating over two million workers, mainly black and Latin, leading to the largest prison population in the world! That population doubled under President Clinton and President Obama has deported over 2 million of our undocumented brothers and sisters, more than all presidents in the U.S. for the last 100 years combined!

From our immigrant brothers and sisters being held in concentration camps, to our black youth targeted by the police, these racist attacks are part of a much larger attack on the entire working class!

Workers of the World Unite

We need more rebellions because they are not just against the racist police murders. The justified anger beneath these protests is also directed at the racist unemployment, poor quality of education, and health care that black, Latin and all workers face. Meanwhile, trillions of profits that our class produced are spent on oil wars in the Middle East!

Rebellions alone are not enough. The root cause of this oppression and murder is an international capitalist system that *needs* racism to divide our class and keep us separated by terrorizing some with assassinations on the streets and others with deportations in order to maximize their profits. Remember, the same U.S.-made weapons that the cops carry are the same that the Israeli troops carry to murder our Arab and Muslim brothers and sisters in Gaza.

We need to turn antiracist rebellions of mostly black youth into breeding grounds for communist revolutionaries. This could inspire the whole working class into fighting for a communist future: without money, profits or any need for racism, nationalism, sexism or imperialist world wars.

Join PLP as we unite with all workers oppressed by capitalism, and fight for a new system that really works for the working class: communism!

Start by joining us as we march in solidarity with the families of Ezell Ford and Omar Abrego on September 13 at 7 pm on 65th and Broadway in Los Angeles, CA.✪

WASHINGTON, DC — Since the racist murder of Mike Brown in Ferguson, Missouri by racist killer cop Darren Wilson, workers and students in Washington have been on the move. Three hundred people, black and white, from many organizations attended a vigil on Thursday, August 14 at Malcolm X Park.

The PLP distributed dozens of CHALLENGES and over 150 flyers calling for a rally on Saturday to reach out further to the community to mobilize. The flyer was based on the lead article in CHALLENGE attacking racist police murders from Ferguson to New York City and noted that the murder of Miriam Carey in D.C. one year ago had not led to justice but to the exoneration of the police who killed her.

A PLP organizer at the rally reported that many participants were glad PLP was there. She told many people there how PLP cut its teeth on the Harlem Rebellion in 1964 against the killer cop, including distributing widely a Wanted for Murder — Gilligan the Cop flyer. People were impressed with the Party's 50 years of fighting racism, capitalism and police brutality. One young man who is Latin and black talked about how he views things differently from someone who is only black. He has relatives in Mexico near the El Paso border. He thinks he might never see them again because of the border crackdown.

Meanwhile, over 300 students at Howard University held a vigil of their own, pledging to continue the struggle against police brutality.

On Saturday, August 16, the PLP organized leafleting and petitioning at the Columbia Heights Metro Station and at the Stoddert Terrace public housing development, gaining almost 100 signatures on a petition demanding the firing and indictment of cop Darren Wilson and the release without charges of all protesters arrested in Ferguson. Meanwhile, a friend of the Party in the Stoddert Terrace community posted a similar online petition that received over 5,000 signatures in a matter of hours. Community residents continue to circulate the petition at rallies and in the housing development.

The murder sparked discussion on jobs and schools throughout the area, including a vigorous discussion with new medical residents, who mainly come from countries other than the U.S., at Prince George's Community Hospital about the overall history of police brutality, the recent murder of Miriam Carey, and the vicious Ferguson murder.

On Thursday, August 21, a Howard University student organized a rally of several hundred students at the Columbia Heights Metro Station. At the same time, 120 students gathered on campus with the student government leadership to develop longer-term plans for a movement using economic power to force changes in federal policy. A PL'er was invited as a guest speaker to describe the Boycott Wells

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To Murderers of Kyam Livingston:

'My daughter died in a pen, you won't pen me in!'

BROOKLYN, NY, August 21 — It has been thirteen months since Kyam Livingston died in a Brooklyn Central Booking holding cell. Kyam's mother, sister and other family members along with their supporters have vowed that Kyam's death will not have been in vain. They vow to fight to change the conditions in Central Booking.

Family members had hoped to see politicians support the struggle and the newly elected Brooklyn District Attorney bring charges against those responsible for Kyam's death. But they now view politicians as liars who will say anything to get elected and then do nothing for workers once in office.

PL'ers in this struggle are fighting to make clear that the politicians are only puppets doing the bidding for the capitalist ruling class of big bankers and business owners.

Today's rally on Flatbush and Church started with a bang. As we assembled, the police started putting together metal fencing to pen in our demonstration. Kyam's mom responded quickly, saying "my daughter died in a pen, you won't pen me in!" She pushed aside the fences that blocked access to workers exiting the nearby subway station.

As a crowd grew, chants rang out, "We want justice for Kyam Livingston, killed in a Brooklyn cell!" Leaflets and over 200 copies of CHALLENGE were distributed. Soon, the fences were moved and we could easily reach the large numbers of mainly black workers who stopped on their way home to hear our speeches and take literature being distributed.

Notably, this was the first time that a significant number of young white workers stopped to take leaflets and CHALLENGE. They are no doubt angered by recent racist cop murders. This is a step in building multiracial unity.

Members of the Justice for Kyam Livingston Committee spoke linking Kyam's death and the murders of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo. as well as Eric Garner, Kimani Gray, and Shantel Davis here in NYC. Kyam's mother explained that our struggle has resulted in the release of the video tapes (first said not to exist) and the names of the jailers in Central Bookings who did not respond to Kyam's pleas for medical help.

A retired unionist spoke about raising support for this and other anti-racist struggles in unions, churches, tenant associations and other community groups as a way of building this struggle and making sure that the monthly demonstrations grow. He urged those present to also attend the rally in Staten Island linking the struggle against police murders in Ferguson, and New York.

A teacher speaking for the Progressive Labor Party explained that this is not an issue of a few bad cops but rather a fight against the capitalist system whose police forces are used to terrorize the working class in general, especially black and Latin workers. She made it clear that racist police murders would continue as long as capitalists ruled us.

The list of names of those murdered by the racist police is already much too long. A system that survives based on racism and racist terror needs to be overthrown by communist revolution!✪



Los Angeles — Protest against cop killings

LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.

From Haiti to Mexico: Solidarity with Ferguson Rebellion

Comrades of Ferguson, listen to this voice, this clarion call ringing loudly from the other side of the ocean, traveling a thousand miles from Haiti to reach you. This voice, coming from the victims of all sorts of prejudice, racist discrimination and racist violence, is not a voice of resignation. Just the opposite, this voice is a call for a continual struggle against all kinds of apartheid, discrimination, social exclusion, anti-Semitism, racism and sexism. This voice is a call for real liberation, for the well-being of our class, against all sorts of inequalities, exploitation, slavery and alienation.

We are reinforcing your voices which denounce racist violence committed against Michael Brown and others, and to call you to class struggle. When we say class struggle, we mean those struggles against the ruling class; struggles by workers, students, unemployed and soldiers — the working class — which fights against exploitation and neo-colonialism. We say that this fight is especially against racism, one of the pillars of the capitalist system. The bosses use racism to divide the working class and to make superprofits; therefore, the fight against racism unites the working class and makes it stronger in its fight against the bosses and their rotten, barbaric, war-mongering system.

All the way from Haiti, we hear and understand what your struggle is all about. Just like in Ferguson (and elsewhere), the criminal cops — we call them the "legal bandits" (which includes all the politicians, rulers and big bosses who control the system), kill innocents in working-class neighborhoods, massacre youth, the children of workers and peasants.

In Nov. 2011, the police were implicated in the disappearance of a student at the University of Human and Social Sciences, located in another working class neighborhood in Port-au-Prince. On Nov. 10, 2012, a cop killed a student in the courtyard of his university law school campus. During the demonstrations demanding justice, another youth was assassinated by the very same police, and then accused of stealing, just as the police of Ferguson are trying to do to Michael Brown. In Oct.-Nov. 2013, another student dodged a grenade thrown by the police — in a military show of force like you saw in Ferguson — inside his university campus; this young comrade lost his hand in the ensuing explosion. This grenade, by the way, was provided to the Haitian police by their masters in the United States, just as the U.S. military has been arming local police forces as if they were at war against the U.S. working class and students.

In Haiti, the cops, minions of the bosses, and MINUSTAH (occupation army sent by the U.N.) terrorize students and residents of working-class neighborhoods on a daily basis. However, we are never going to let fear or resignation get the best of us. Every day we confront the violence of this system. We will never lower our arms. We believe in and we fight for the victory of the working class for real justice and real freedom.

In the U.S., you have known a long fight against racism. We know that what happened in Ferguson resonated with old tensions. You have fought against segregation and for jobs, and you have to keep up this struggle. You must know that equality and liberty are not possible without well-being. That is, we need and have a right to real jobs and decent wages, with adequate healthcare and education, with affordable housing and the right to live in safety. But we have to fight for these things because we know by experience that those who control this system will not give them of their own free will.

We have to organize to fight against the crime of unemployment, against the exploitation of the workers by the bosses, against capitalist exploitation and abuse of natural resources, against wars to protect the profits of the bosses, and against the apartheid and racism that exists everywhere in the world. We are a single class. Let us unite against all the atrocities committed for the benefit of the few throughout the world, against the inhumanity and savagery and cruelty of the capitalist system. To fight against capitalism is to fight against inequality.

You are not alone in facing off against the violence of this system. We, the students and youth of Haiti, stand with you in your struggle. And in resisting, in rebelling, and in organizing, we will win. Shout along with us, "To the final victory!" Only a revolutionary struggle can lead to real victory for our class. Let us unite, let us commit ourselves so that Michael Brown is the last victim of this racist system.

Comrades in Haiti

Members and friends of Progressive Labor Party (PLP) in Mexico condemn the racist murder of our class brother, the young Michael Brown. We applaud the rebellion of Ferguson workers to demand justice, and we call on them to fight in the long run for a communist revolution to destroy the capitalist system that creates racism and is incapable of providing justice for the working class.

The murder of Michael Brown has its origin in racism, one of capitalism's ideological pillars. The bosses promote racist ideas through its culture, its education, and its mass media; their cops put it in practice systematically repressing and murdering working-class black and Latin workers. Racist ideas and practices terrorize and divide the working class, and in addition, by justifying lower wages for black and Latin workers produce huge profits for the bosses.

Racism won't end or diminish under capitalism; on the contrary, we expect racist attacks to continue and sharpen as the economic crises deepen and inter-imperialist rivalry becomes more violent. We must confront these racist attacks like they did in Ferguson, with our fist up! But mostly, we must commit to the struggle for a communist society where racism is abolished. This is PLP's worldwide objective. Join us! Honor Michael and all the other youth terrorized and murdered by capitalism. Fight for communism!

Comrades in Mexico



Protests Sweep D.C.

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Fargo campaign. He linked the murder of Mike Brown to the New Jim Crow described in Michelle Alexander's book of the same name, pointing out that Wells Fargo profits enormously from its investments in private prisons like GEO corporation. They lobby for mandatory minimum sentences and 3-strike laws with life without parole to ensure a profitable flow of prisoners to their facilities. Racism is central to the entire capitalist system, and requires revolutionary, militant action to stop. During that meeting, 100 students signed the Justice for Mike Brown petition.

The Metropolitan Washington Public Health Association Disparities Committee had a meeting on August 21 at which Ferguson was discussed. A recent graduate of the University of Maryland who attended the meeting declared that she now really understood her African American History class! It all came together — the socioeconomics, the divisions created by racism and the need for militancy.

On Saturday, August 23, at 7 pm, several hundred students and workers gathered at Mt. Vernon Square and marched to Gallery Place Metro Station at the Verizon Center, closing streets in this busy commercial area, and pledging to continue protesting until justice is achieved. PLP distributed dozens of CHALLENGES to participants at this event. The need for class analysis of society was quite clear, though, as one speaker declared that, among the police, there were "officers" who keep the community safe and there were "occupiers" who oppress the black population.

PLP knows, however, that the role of the police in a capitalist society is to enforce racist and anti-working class oppression, and that applies to them all —there is no "Officer Friendly"! Nevertheless, the tone of the demonstration was militant. Many young protestors now see what their parents and grandparents meant when they confronted the cops in the struggle for civil rights, in strikes, and in anti-war protests. The chant: "Michael Brown, Emmet Till, How many black boys will you kill?" at the rally showed this historical consciousness. While the pacifist, defeatist slogan "Hands Up, Don't Shoot" was still the most frequent chant, protestors are beginning to reverse this slogan to "Fists up, shoot back," a slogan on a PL'ers sign.✪



SWAT's Fascist War on Workers

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It is with these kinds of battlefield armaments that the police could appear on the streets of even small cities like Ferguson to enforce the rulers' racist attacks in the 17,000 police agencies in the 50 states and territories mentioned above.

Historically — particularly in World War II — it has been communists who have led the fight to smash fascism. It was the Red Armies of the Soviet Union and China and the partisan and resistance movements in Europe and Asia that smashed Hitler's Nazis and the Japanese fascists. It is from these heroic fighters that Progressive Labor Party is inspired to build a revolutionary communist movement to topple today's fascists — whether they be in the White House, in Israel, in Beijing, in the European Union or Moscow. Out of a class war against the world's capitalists communists can lead the struggle to erect a society run by and for the working class and rid the earth of the evils created by the profit system — unemployment, poverty, racism, sexism and imperialist war.✪



Bounkham Phonesavanh, "Baby Bou Bou"



Eurie Stamp



Jose Guerena



Tarika Wilson



Aiyana Stanley-Jones

Blows Infant's Face and Chest

…The Phonesavanh family…drove…to stay with relatives…outside Atlanta, Georgia….

Just before 3:00 am on…a night in May of 2014, a team of SWAT officers armed with assault rifles burst into the room where the family was sleeping….One... officer threw a flashbang grenade into the room. It landed in Baby Bou Bou's crib.

It took several hours before…the baby's parents were able to see their son. The 19-month-old had been…placed into a medically induced coma. When the flashbang grenade exploded, it blew a hole…in Bou Bou's face and chest,…so deep it exposed his ribs….

The SWAT team was executing a "no knock" warrant to search for someone who did not live in the home that was raided: [a] nephew who was suspected of making a $50 drug sale "After breaking down the door, throwing my husband to the ground and screaming at my children, the officers — armed with M-16s — filed through the house like they were playing war," said Alecia [the mother]. The officers did not find any guns or drugs in the house and no arrests were made. [The] nephew was eventually arrested…at another location, holding a small amount of drugs….

"My three little girls are terrified of the police now….They're afraid the cops will kill them or their family…."

When asked about the prevalence of SWAT raids to fight the War on Drugs, Alecia [said], "This is all about race. You don't see SWAT teams going into a white collar community, throwing grenades into their homes."

Kills 7-year-old Girl

In 2010, 7-year-old Aiyana Stanley-Jones was killed when, just after midnight, a [Detroit] SWAT team threw a flashbang grenade through the window into the living room where she was asleep. The flashbang burned her blanket and a member of the SWAT team burst into the house, firing a single shot, which killed her.

RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

Below are excerpts from mainstream newspapers that may be of use for our readers. Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly, LAT=Los Angeles Times

Don't count on Holder for fair investigation in Ferguson

USA, Today 8/20 — Attorney General Eric Holder…[maintained] "Our investigation into…[the murder of Michael Brown] will be full,…fair and…independent." But Holder's own record belies his lofty promise. As the U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia from 1993 to 1997, Holder was in charge of policing the local police. When police violence spiraled out of control, he did little to protect Washington residents from rampaging lawmen.

….Killings by Washington police doubled between 1988 and 1995…. Washington police shot and killed people at a higher rate than any other major city police department, as a …Washington Post investigation revealed in late 1998. The Post reported that….Holder declared: "I can't honestly say I saw anything that was excessive."

….Washington police failed to count almost a third of the people killed by their officers between 1994 and 1997. Even when police review boards ruled that shootings were unjustified or found contradictions in officers' testimony, police were not prosecuted. In one case, a police officer shot a suspect four times in the back when he was unarmed and lying on the ground. But Holder's office never bothered interviewing the shooter.

Some of the most abusive cases involved police shooting into cars…. Actually, "more than 50 officers over five years had shot at unarmed drivers in cars," the Post noted…. Reports about some of the shootings were tainted by police perjury.

…A local judge slammed the Washington government for its "deliberate indifference" to police brutality complaints. In 1995, the Civilian Complaint Review Board, which purportedly investigated…police abuses, was shut down because it was overwhelmed by a backlog of accusations from aggrieved citizens….Holder's office remained asleep at the switch. Even assistant Washington police chief Terrance Gainer admitted: We shoot too often, and we shoot too much when we do shoot."

….While Holder largely ignored killings by police, Holder lobbied the….Washington City Council to impose mandatory minimum prison sentences for nonviolent drug offenders, including a prison sentence of up to 5 years for anyone possessing more than 1.5 ounces of marijuana [which]…helped Holder snare a promotion to Deputy Attorney General in 1997.

The Post series sparked an uproar which resulted in the Justice Department Civil Rights Division investigating Washington police shootings from the prior 5 years…. [Clinton's] Attorney General Janet Reno put [Holder] in charge of that effort….His office denied that any conflict of interest existed….Local lawyer Michael Morgenstern, who had sued DC police in such cases, scoffed that Holder "had the opportunity to do this when he was there, and now all of a sudden, they're sending him back to do the same job he didn't do while he was there."

As the smoke clears in Ferguson, Missouri, Americans have no reason to presume that either the local police or the feds have the market cornered on truth or justice. But Eric Holder's record should raze any presumption that our attorney general deserves the benefit of the doubt on passing judgment on police shootings.

Cop murderers not 'bad apples' — systematically trained to kill

USA Today, 8/27 — [Eleven years ago] Detroit police officer David Krupinski pulled his trigger twice and watched the [39-year-old deaf black man who couldn't hear the cop's orders] crumple face-down onto the driveway....

One bullet struck Shaw's lower abdomen, the other went through his chest and lodged in his spine. He pitched forward face-down onto the driveway, where he died. "They taught us to shoot to kill," Krupinski said. And he did.

The shooting turned Krupinski into the face of a police force already besieged by complaints that its officers were too quick to kill, particularly when white officers encountered black suspects.

Killings by police officers are a daily event in the United States; at least 400 are reported to the FBI each year, and the true total is almost certainly far higher.

Not long after...the mayor took the unusual step of asking the U.S. Justice Department to investigate his own police force. That probe found an alarming pattern of abuses, including a series of unjustified shootings.

[The 11-year oversight ended but]...a spokesman for the Detroit coalition Against Police Brutality [says]: "...it hasn't really changed in 10 years."

Bosses' super-profit off working mothers

NYT, 8/21 — Women get paid less than men in almost all jobs, but when women in low-wage jobs need to take time off work to care for children , they are at an even greater disadvantage….

People in low-wage jobs do not benefit much from working more, but get paid disproportionately less per hour when they work fewer than 40 hours a week….

Working-class women are much more likely than high-wage ones to leave work altogether when their children are infants or toddlers….in part because the United States does not mandate paid maternity leave or subsidized child care, so many women cannot afford to keep a job while their children are young.

Once women return to work, they get paid less than men still on the job because they have lost skills during their time off and because they tend to work less than full time. As a result, they are more likely than men to work in hourly jobs instead of higher-paying salary…ones, and get paid less even for the hours they work.

Racist SWAT Killings: The War Comes Home

Kills 26-Year-Old Mother Holding Infant Son

Tarika Wilson wasn't the suspect. She died when SWAT officers broke down her front door and opened fire….Ms. Wilson was holding her 14-month-old son when she was shot. The baby was injured….The SWAT team was looking for Ms. Wilson's boyfriend on suspicion of drug dealing when they raided Ms. Wilson's rented house on the Southside of Lima [Ohio], the only city with a significant African-American population in a region of farmland.

The racist murder of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, is no accident. It is part of what an American Civil Liberties Union report, "The War Comes Home," labels "The militarization of American policing….policies, practices, and weaponry [which]…have turned…many…neighborhoods into war zones" (Report, page 3). And it is racist to the core. The battleground is "disproportionately… in [black and Latin] communities" (p. 2). "The majority — 79 percent — of SWAT deployments…studied were for…executing a search warrant, most commonly in drug investigations." And 61 percent of all people subjected to these SWAT raids were black and Latin (p. 31, p. 36). The Report depicts a typical scenario:

You are at home with your family, sleeping soundly in the early morning hours. You awaken suddenly to a loud explosion and the sound of glass shattering. A bright light blinds you and there is a terrible ringing in your ears. You cannot see anything, but…you hear the harrowing sound of your front door being broken down as your children begin to scream….You look outside your window and see what appears to be a tank in your driveway. Suddenly people…break through your bedroom door….They are wearing black and carrying assault rifles, and their faces are masked. You hear people yelling at you and your partner to get on the floor and put your hands behind your back. Your children are still screaming in the next room and your dog is barking…. The people lead you…into the living room, pointing rifles at you….Someone quickly handcuffs you to the chair. More people then bring your partner and your children into the living room at gunpoint. Your dog is still barking and one of the people shoots it, killing it instantly….They proceed to ransack your home, breaking down doors and shattering windows….The explosion you heard earlier came from a grenade….They hold you and your family at gunpoint for the next several hours, refusing to answer any questions about why they are there and what they are looking for. Once they have finally left, you find your home in shambles. Broken glass litters the floor….Your dog lies breathless in a pool of its own blood. Tables are overturned, papers are strewn about, and electronic equipment had been ripped from the walls….Your partner is desperately trying to calm your hysterical children.

…This is not a scene from an action movie and did not happen during…a…battle in an overseas war. This is the militarization of…state and local police, and events like this are happening every day in homes throughout America (p. 12).

U.S. Death Squads

"Across the country, heavily armed …SWAT teams are forcing their way into people's homes in the middle of the night…deploying explosive devices such as flashbang grenades to temporarily blind and deafen residents, simply to serve a search warrant on the suspicion…of a small amount of drugs.

"American policing has become…dangerously militarized…through federal programs that have armed state and local…agencies with the weapons and tactics of war….Using federal funds…have amassed military arsenals purportedly to wage the failed War on Drugs (p. 2).

"SWAT raids are…violent events…20 or more officers armed with assault rifles and grenades approach a home, break down doors and windows.…using battering rams….and scream for the people inside to get on the floor…pointing their guns at them….often…use Armored Personnel Carriers….deployed when there were children present…which the SWAT team knew in advance…." (p. 3).

The ACLU estimates there are 45,000 such SWAT raids every year, an average of 124 every day!

U.S. Ruling Class's Blueprint for Fascism

In the 1990s prior to 9/11, the Clinton administration created the Hart-Rudman Commission whose report outlined a plan to concentrate all government branches concerned with policing the U.S. population into one overall agency: the Department of Homeland Security. CHALLENGE marked this event as a step towards full-blown fascism and noted that racism was its cutting edge. The racist militarization described above is the result — a Gestapo to terrorize workers from rebelling against the effects of a declining capitalism that is completely impoverishing our class — as well as to keep in line those bosses whose short-term profit outlook the ruling finance capitalists view as threatening the long-range existence of their system.

Actually "SWAT teams [were] created to deal with emergency scenarios such as hostage or barricade situations" but with the emergence of the "War on Drugs" in the 1980s, their "use to execute search warrants in drug investigations has become commonplace….[It] essentially amounts to the use of paramilitary tactics to conduct domestic drug investigations in people's homes….

Shoots Grandfather of Twelve

FRAMINGHAM, MA — Eric Stamp was in his pajamas, watching a baseball game, when SWAT officers forced a battering ram through his front door and threw a flashbang grenade inside. Stamp, a 68-year-old grandfather of twelve, followed the officers' orders to lie facedown on the floor with his arms above his head. He died in that position, when one of the officers' guns discharged. Stamp wasn't the suspect….The suspect was arrested outside the house minutes before the raid. Even though the suspect didn't live in Stamp's home, the SWAT team still decided to carry out the raid.

Shoots Veteran 22 times

TUSCON, ARIZONA — Jose Guerena, a 26-year-old Iraq war veteran, returned home and crawled into bed after working the graveyard shift at the Asarco Mission mine. Around 9:30 am, his wife became nervous when she heard strange noises and the outline of a man outside her window. She woke Guerena, who asked his wife to hide in a closet with their 4-year-old son. Guerena picked up his rifle, with the safety on, and went to investigate. A SWAT team fired 71 shots at Guerena, 22 of which entered his body and killed him. Guerena died on his kitchen floor, without medical attention. The SWAT officers raided multiple homes in the neighborhood, and…did find a small bag of marijuana. No drugs were found in the Guerena's home.

The majority (79 percent) of SWAT deployments the ACLU studied was for…executing search warrant, most commonly in drug investigations" (p. 31). And 61 percent of those SWAT raids were against black and Latin people (p. 36).

The militarization of U.S. policing "has occurred as a direct result of federal programs that use equipment transfers and funding to encourage aggressive enforcement of the War on Drugs by state and local police agencies" (p. 16).

"The Department of Defense operates the 1033 Program…whose motto is 'from warfighter to crimefighter….' The program has transferred $4.3 billion worth of property through the 1033 Program. Today the 1033 Program includes more than 17,000 federal and state law enforcement agencies from all U.S. states and territories" (p. 24).

In 2007, "the U.S. spent $50 billion to produce 27,000 MRAPs [Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles] and deploy them in Iraq and Afghanistan….MRAPs have made their way into local communities….through the 1033 program." These programs "create incentives for state and local police to use…aggressive weapons and tactics designed for the battlefield" (p. 6, p. 22). "Agencies…received funding from….Federal Department of Homeland Security Grant Programs…[and] State Homeland Security Grant Programs" (p. 10). In Arizona alone this weaponry included:

- 1034 guns, of which 712 are rifles
- 64 armored vehicles
- 17 helicopters
- 42 forced entry tools, such as battering rams
- 32 bomb suits
- 830 units of surveillance and reconnaissance equipment
- 13,409 personal protective equipment and/or uniforms
- 704 units of night vision equipment
- 120 utility trucks
- 21,211 other types of military equipment

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